

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, December 21. 1708.

AND now a Word or two more with you about Persecution in *Scotland*; here is a mighty Stir about this Thing call'd Persecution, I wish we were once led to Principles, and let us examine the State of the Case:

The *Rebeareſal* in the Name of the *High-Flying Party* in *England* will have it—that Suppressing *Jacobites* is Persecution for Conscience; and the new Narrative, which he is so fond of, goes upon the same Foot, and pleads for Liberty to the *Jacobite Clergy*.

We say, it is not Persecution but suppressing Faction and Disaffection; and that it cannot be expected, that any Government should protect those Subjects that will not give common Assurances of their Fidelity to

that Government; and this I take to be the short Question.

Whether the present Government ought to give Liberty to the *Jacobite Meetings*, and give their Ministers leave to pray for a *Popish Pretender* as lawful Sovereign? Whether the Government ought to be easie with People who pray against the Government, as a Rebellion, and a Force upon Right? Whether the QUEEN should be expected to skreen those People from the Law, who invoke Heaven to destroy her, who treat her as an Usurper, and pray for her Enemy?

These are short Questions, and this I take to be arguing closely. To pretend that others are persecuted who have qualify'd, is shuffling with the Argument, because it

will

will not appear true in Fact, and they are fain to bring in Examples of scandalous Persons legally depos'd, who, tho' all the rest had been tollerated, ought not to have been suffer'd — And I would be glad, Mr. Rehearsal would find out some, who are not thus scandalous to give Instances of ; I am perswaded, if there are any such, the Government here or there knows nothing of it.

Now to justifie these People, the *Rehearsal* N° 20. brings in the *Cameronians*, and tells of their Obstinacy against the Government, and how they refu'd to pray for King Charles II. or to say GOD save him. And why is he not honest to the Story, and tell us, how they were treated for it, how every private Soldier had Orders to shoot without farther Trial any Person he met, that would not say GOD save the King, renounce the Covenant, and say that killing the Archbishop of St. Andrews was Murther. — And how a poor innocent Woman and a Girl of about 14 Years old, were ty'd to a Stake at Low-Water Mark without any Trial, only because they would not say GOD save the King, and the Tide suffer'd to flow over them ; with innumerable such Crueltie : Men shot to Death without time given them to pray to GOD, having no other Crime laid to them, than that they had been at a Meeting, nay some only because they had a Bible in their Pockets — And the like — With Inhumanities and Barbarities innumerable, such as our Ears would tingle to hear, and Protestants should blush to relate, and which indeed Mr. Rehearsal extorts from me sore against my Will ; for I would not have these Things seen the Light again, with Respect to Britain in general ; but if it must be, it must be, there is no Remedy, all Mischiefs are due to their first Causes.

Next to this, the *Rehearsal* charges, and very unfairly, the Extravagances of the *Cameronians* upon the *Presbyterians* ; he might as well charge the Enthusiasms of the *Muglettians*, or the Notions

of the New Prophets upon the Church of England ; for he is not ignorant, that these People neither own, or are own'd by the Church of Scotland, any more than the other are by the Church of England.

But above all, 'tis a senseless wild Tale, and fit only to be infus'd among People that will hear nothing, but on one side ; to tell us, these People must be allow'd to pray for King James VIII. as they call him, because there were *Cameronians*, that would not say GOD save the King.

Pray, let us enquire a little into the Logick of this, how odly it sounds by Way of Argument, and how absurd it is for Men of common Reasoning to talk thus — The *Jacobites* must be allow'd to pray against the Government, because the *Cameronians* did do so ; tho' these are only shut up, and they were butcher'd for it, these must pray against the Government, and go free, because they did pray against the Government, and were put to Death for it — In short these must be allow'd, because those were not, and the like ; this is excellent Logick indeed, and some of the best the Case will bear.

To prove they are persecuted, Men are brought in that have taken the Oaths, yet have their Meeting-Houses shut up — And a blessed Instance they have given of it in the Person of Mr. Alexander Heriot, of whom I have said enough — Now they pretend, there are Persons prosecuted for his baptizing their Children ; I will not say, How far the Church of Scotland may go, but the Church of England would and has prosecuted People for baptizing Children, who were no Ministers — And the Church of Scotland have more Reason to prosecute any Man for letting him baptize, than for a Chimney-Sweeper to have done it ; since he not only in the Sence of the Law was not a Minister, and therefore had no Title to administer in Holy Things, but invaded the Function in Defiance of the Law, which had divest'd him of his Office. But of this more hereafter.

MISCELLANE A.

AND now Gentlemen, it being Present-Tim^e, and a Time when Matters of Trade come more particularly upon the Stage, give me Leave in this Part of the Review to re-assume that Subject, in which I have been often interrupted, I mean a Discourse of Trade; our Commerce has many Coblers, every Body is stitching it up, and quacking about it; but I see little Progress made in the Diseases of it—— I am no Doctor that way, nor do I pretend to much; but I shall perhaps make some Attempts to show you its present Grievances, and your own Enquiry will in part lead you to the Remedy.

In pursuing this great Affair, perhaps I may come to the Subject of Trade in England, and tell you, how you may make good, what was lustily promis'd in your Names at the Time of the Union. Viz. That England would assist Scotland in Trade, and that Scotland would be improv'd by England in Trade after the Union; I must allow, that so much Forwardness in that Matter does not yet appear as I expected, and yet tho' I did not expect at the Rate some People did neither; I am not out of Hopes, as some pretend to be, that it shall not appear at all; and therefore to do my Part, I shall in this Paper attempt to shew you, wherein the Improving Scotland in Trade may consist with your Improving your own Trade; and if I can come to tell you, how you shall get by prompting Scotland to Trade, I make no Question, if you will not hearken to it for their Sakes, you will for your own.

But I must first talk to you a little about your own Affair—— Trade is the Life and Wealth of this Nation, 'tis its Nobility, its Foundation, and the great Mine from whence its Wealth has sprung; whenever our Commerce dies, the Common-Wealth will languish, Government choak'd with Obstructions, will have the Green-Sickness, grow pale and faint, and by Degrees fall into an irretrievable Consumption. Trade is the Animal Spirit to this great Body,

which having passed thro' many Decoctions, is at last arriv'd to a Moral Capacity of enlivening the whole Frame.

No wonder, our Legislative Authority has always been tender of, and concern'd about this great Article, our Trade; no wonder Laws and Amendments to Laws pass every Session thro' their Hands, for the confirming, securing, assisting and improving our Trade; the Great Representative of Britain cannot be so ignorant, that this is the substantial Article of our Prosperity, and next to our Peace, the main Hinge the whole Nation turns upon—— How quickly would this great and populous City be uninhabited, the Streets become empty, the Houses fall down, vast Estates in Rents be lost, and the rest sink low, if the Trade should die? How would Strangers abandon us, our own People fly from us, our Ships lie by the Walls, our Ports decay, our Revenues cease, and in short the whole Mass of Blood in the Body Politick, stagnate and corrupt for Want of Circulation; how would the Countries lie untill'd, our Enclosures be laid open, our rich Pastures be unmanur'd, our Flocks of Sheep grow unprofitable for Want of Vent for their Wool, our Herds of Beeves, and our Daries be useless for Want of People to consume them, our Manufactures die for Want of Vent, and our Poor over-run us for Want of Employ?

Trade therefore being of that Consequence to us in this Nation, I cannot but think, my Time shall be bestow'd to your Advantage in speaking something, on one hand, to such Defects or Distempers of your Commerce, as seem to threaten you with any Decay; and on the other hand, to such Advantages and Prospects, as seem to promise you any Improvement; and if this may open any of your Eyes to the Interest of your Country, and quicken the Application of our Government to the necessary Support and Encouragement of Negoce, I presume, the Time in writing, or the Readers in perusing these Sheets, may not be lost.